

STAT

Page Denied

STAT

INVESTIGATION OF STATE-OPERATED ANIMAL FARMS IN NORTH CHINA
REVEALS POOR PLANNING AND NEGLECT

[Summary: According to a report on the investigations of state-operated animal farms in the North China Administrative Area, by the Agricultural and Forestry Bureau of the North China Administrative Committee, the ten provincial state-operated animal farms in North China have made progress in breeding, production, and organization during the past 3 years. Although preliminary work has been completed, there is still much improvement to be made in leadership, techniques, working conditions, and planning. Costs must be reduced, disease and death rates lowered, and the propagation rate increased.]

The North China Administrative Area has ten provincial state-operated animal farms. Altogether they own 298 pure-bred horses, 50⁺ head of cattle, and 2,280 head of hogs and sheep. The farms cover an area of more than 300,000 mou, including 5,000 mou of tilled land, and employ 574 workers.

There are also nine special administrative district (league) and hsien (banner) animal farms, with a total of 438 horses, 342 head of cattle, donkeys, and mules, and 2,855 head of hogs and sheep. These farms employ 128 workers.

During the past 3 years, the ten provincial state-operated animal farms have collectively produced 121 horses and 2,001 head of cattle and sheep. The animals on the special administrative district and hsien animal farms have also been increasing rapidly. For example, a new state farm set up in 1953 in the central banner of Suiyuan Province, produced in that year 249 head of horses, cattle, and sheep. The state farms showed a higher propagation and survival rate than the local farms. Under the supervision of these state farms are 102 horse, cattle, and sheep breeding stations to assist the local farmers to improve their stock. For example, in the past 3 years, the horse breeding stations in this group bred a total of 30,000 horses and made progress in artificial insemination techniques.

Besides this, many animal farms are concerned with the study of advanced Soviet experience and operational management. These studies have increased their efficiency rate and amount of production. For example, in Shansi, a T'ai-Yuan animal farm was able to make a profit of 160 million yuan in 1953; a Kuei-sui dairy farm, in which each cow only produced an average of 3,500 catties of milk in 1952, increased the average to 5,500 catties in 1953, surpassing the original plan by 37 percent; on a Shansi horse farm 85 percent of the horses have produced offspring in the past 3 years. Although the preliminary work has been completed during the past 3 years, these farms still have a long way to go because of weak leadership and unskilled cadres.

In general, the ten provincial animal farms lack good planning, with the exception of the Suiyuan Provincial Farm which, under the guidance of Soviet specialists, has a definite production plan and regular birth rate. The others do not carry out their work in accordance with the needs of the local people, as, for example, the Shansi Provincial Sheep Farm where operations are confused. On that farm simplification is essential. Due to poor breeding techniques, the stock is deteriorating, and after 5 years the management still has not begun to keep a breeding record. At T'ai-yuan, careless breeding techniques resulted in only 50 percent of the cattle producing offspring in 1953; also, the death rate of pigs and chickens was exceedingly high.

Poor planning has also resulted in a large amount of capital being wasted during various construction programs on these state farms. For example, the Shansi Provincial Horse Farm spent 3 billion yuan for construction (1.4 billion yuan was the basic reconstruction cost). A great deal of this was completely

STAT

wasted because of the nature of the farm layout. For example, the fodder storage was too far from the barns, and barns for sick horses were in the coldest spots where there was no protection from the wind. The site for the farm was poorly chosen, since the grass supply was insufficient to meet needs, and the two water holes which cost 20 million yuan to repair and build both ran dry. The Suiyuan Sheep Farm was poorly located in a position that prevented expansion, being surrounded by water canals on three sides and crops on the fourth.

Farm management lacks good operational planning, with costs too high and too many unproductive personnel. For example, on the Shansi Provincial Horse Farm, 20.3 percent of the total personnel are office workers, and there are 71 workers to tend only 33 mares. The financial affairs of the farms are in a bad condition because their statisticians are inexperienced and poorly trained. Because of inadequate planning most of the farms do not have enough fodder and grass lands to supply food for the animals. Because of poor control of materials, the Shansi Provincial Horse Farm lost 10 million yuan in 1953. All the farms have to buy fodder from outside sources; this amounted to approximately one million catties in 1953. According to incomplete statistics from the Shansi Provincial Horse Farm, to breed and raise a horse costs from 25 to 30 million yuan which is from 10 to 15 million yuan more expensive than importing one from the Soviet Union. To correct all the defects, a new attitude and correct thinking must be developed on the farms.

Many of the farms have a low birth rate and an ever increasing disease and death rate due to technical problems. Poor nourishment and lack of exercise on the Shansi Provincial Horse Farm have left the mares in a condition where breeding is more difficult and diseases, especially those of the alimentary tract are widespread. Of the 109 cases of disease appearing in the 114 horses during the first half of 1953, 35 percent were connected with digestion and 34 percent were leg ailments. During the first half of 1953, diseased cattle on the Shansi Provincial Animal Farm amounted to 23 head; the number has since risen to 30 head. On the Suiyuan Horse Farm, four pure-bred horses have died in the last 3 years, practically the entire herd of male horses has had pustular infections, and young horses have failed to attain sufficient growth because of neglect. On the Suiyuan Sheep Farm the death rate of sheep in 1951 was 1.4 percent; in 1952, 5.9 percent; and in the first half of 1953 had already reached 4.2 percent.

In 1952, the Wu Meng Animal Farm bred 116 calves, of which 43 died, and more than 900 Tz'u-kai sheep, of which over 400 died. This was due to lack of guidance, skilled workers, good techniques, and a conscientious approach.

The working conditions on these farms are not always good, and on some the cadres even beat the workers. On the Suiyuan Horse Farm, where the workers' welfare was neglected, trouble arose, resulting in the death of one worker and the wounding of 11 others. Conditions must be improved and political thinking and techniques strengthened; also planning and management should change for the better. In the future, state horse and cattle farms should have a 90 percent production rate and state sheep farms a 100 percent production rate. Death and disease rates must be reduced immediately.

- E N D -

STAT